SOME
ARGUMENTS
TO PROVE,

I. The certain Salvation of the Chriſtened Infants of Ungodly, as well as of Godly Chriſtian Parents, dying before actual ſin. *Pag.* 1.

II. That Unconverted Chriſtians are to receive the Lords Supper, as a concurrent means of Converſion. *Pag.* 15.

III. That Miniſters may not repel thoſe of their own Pariſh, which in the Church do orderly preſent themſelves to receive, not being excommunicate. *Pag.* 29.

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Whether it be certain by Gods Word, that Infants which be baptized, dying before actual ſin, are undoubtedly ſaved.

MAſter *Baxter* thinks, "That all the "Children of true Chriſtians, do by "Baptiſm receive a publick inveſti- "ture by Gods appointment into a "ſtate of remiſſion, adoption, and right to ſal- "vation at the preſent: though he dare not ſay "that he is undoubtedly certain of it, as know- "ing how much is ſaid againſt it. But he ſays, "as the Synod of *Dort*, Art. 1. *That believing Pa- "rents have no cauſe to doubt of the ſalvation of "their children that dye in Infancy, before they com- "mit actual ſin*; that is, not to trouble them- "ſelves with fears about it. His reaſons are "two. 1. Becauſe the Infants of the Godly, "being in covenant with God by their Parents "Faith and Dedication, and having right to "Baptiſm, muſt needs have right to the benefits "ſealed thereby, pardon and eternal Life. 2. "Becauſe otherwiſe we have no promiſe, cer- "tainty, or ground of Faith, for the pardon

" and ſalvation of any individual Infants in the " World. But he is not able to prove, nor ſees " any probable reaſon for it, that any but ſound " Believers have ſuch a promiſe for their Chil- " dren: nor that any Hypocrite ſhall certainly " ſave his Child, if he do but dedicate him to " God in Baptiſm. For 1. He finds no promiſe " in Scripture made to ſuch. 2. He ſays, he " that doth not ſincerely believe himſelf, nor " conſent to Gods Covenant, cannot ſincerely " believe for his Child, nor conſent. 3. And " that Faith which will not ſave the Owner, as " being the condition of the promiſe, cannot " ſave another. He confeſſes, That the Church " is to receive the Children of Hypocrites as " well as themſelves. And their Baptiſm is va- " lid *in foro externo Eccleſiæ*, and is not to be re- " iterated. But it goeth no further for his " Child, than for himſelf. So far he, *Chriſtian* " *Directory*. *Eccleſiaſtical Caſes*, *Queſt.* 35. I ſhall modeſtly reaſon touching the ſalvation of the Infants of carnal Chriſtians. By his opinion all Infants who have right to Baptiſm *coram Deo*, as well as *coram Eccleſiâ*, be in a ſtate of Salvation. Now though a carnal Chriſtian want ſaving Grace for himſelf, yet he having a true *dominium* and propriety in his Child, may make a valid dedication of it to God, and enter it into his Oath and Covenant, as he may validly dedicate his Houſe, or Lands, or Goods. *Joab* and *Saul* made Dedications as well as *David* and *Samuel*, 1 *Sam.* 26. 26, 27, 28. *Every devoted thing is moſt holy unto the Lord*, *Levit.* 27. 28. It doth not ſay, every thing devoted by godly people only,

and

and by no other, is moſt holy to the Lord. But though the perſon who devoteth be ungodly, yet if he ſhall ſolemnly and of his own free accord devote part of his Eſtate to pious uſes, it thereby becomes ſacred, and the Lord is made the Owner and Proprietary of it, and it is Sacriledge to detain or rob any ſuch maintenance. As a carnal Chriſtian or Iſraelite may thus devote part of his Eſtate to God, and to his ſervice, ſo he may do by his Infant, and lay a laſting Vow or Oath upon it to be the Lords, as *Joſhua* and the Elders of *Iſrael* did upon themſelves and the Nation of the Jews ſucceſſively, not to ſlay the Gibeonites; the breach whereof by King *Saul*, ſome hundreds of years after, God revenged with three years Famine in King *David*'s time, and the death of ſeven of *Saul*'s Sons. Had *Joſhua* and the Elders of *Iſrael* been carnal, the Oath nevertheleſs had been equally valid and binding. Now carnal Chriſtians and Iſraelites do willingly devote and conſecrate their Infants to the true God, and do validly enter them into his Oath and Covenant, and would not for any thing have their Infants not chriſtened, not circumciſed. Whether Chriſt will accept ſuch Infants or no, we may gather by his own plain words, *Mar.* 10. 13, 14, 15, 16. *They brought young children to him, that he ſhould touch them, and his Diſciples rebuked thoſe that brought them. But when Jeſus ſaw it, he was much diſpleaſed, and ſaid unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of ſuch is the Kingdom of God. Verily I ſay unto you, Whoſoever ſhall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child,*

he ſhall not enter therein. And he took them up into his arms, put his hands upon them, and bleſſed them. Now it is not evident from any words in the Text or Context that theſe Infants were the Infants of the Godly only, though we may charitably hope they were. Chriſt ſeems to make no ſcruple whether the Parents themſelves were ſincerely holy. He doth not ſay, Of the Infants of the Godly only is the Kingdom of God. He doth not ſay, Let none but godly perſons bring their Infants to me and to my Baptiſm. His arms are open to embrace and bleſs with his bleſſing all ſuch Infants as are willingly brought unto him and to his Baptiſm by Parents and Owners, and to pronounce that of ſuch is the Kingdome of Heaven, and he makes them the pattern of all that will be ſaved.

Moreover, it is evident from Scripture that all the Males in *Iſrael*, of carnal as well as godly Iſraelites from *Abraham*'s time, were circumciſed. Indeed for forty years, during their abode in the Wilderneſs, Circumciſion was forborn, both by good and bad. But all that came out of *Ægypt* were circumciſed. And no ſooner were they paſſed over *Jordan*, but by Gods expreſs Command to *Joſhua*, Circumciſion was renewed, and all the Males from eight days old and upwards were circumciſed by immediate order from God, *Joſ.* 5. And this courſe continued throughout every Generation, till by the coming in of Chriſtian Baptiſm, Circumciſion expired. Never any Prophet or holy Man of God that we read of, ſpake againſt it. Now Circumciſion was a Seal or Token of the Covenant between

tween God and the circumcised Infant, and did principally seal heavenly and everlasting Blessings, as our Divines against the Anabaptists do soundly prove. And we are sure that Infants are no losers by the coming of Christ, but rather gainers. It hath been the custom of the Universal Church to baptize the Infants of all within the Church, and to pronounce them washed in the Laver of regeneration, and to count them Children of God, and Members of Christ, and Heirs of his Kingdom. Anabaptists I know be against Infant-Baptism, but they are but a late Sect, and a small handful. I have heard indeed that some of the Independent Way in *New England* forbore for some time to christen the Infants of those baptized parents who did not lead godly lives. But they soon saw the mischief of it, and altered their practice. Moreover, we see plainly that God doth by his Providence owne the Baptism of the Infants of bad as well as of good parents. For many Children of bad parents prove gracious, and begin to be so from their youth, as *Abijah* the gracious young Son of a wicked Father, *Jeroboam*. The Infants of carnal Israelites and Christians are the Seed of the Church, together with the Seed of the Godly. God raiseth his Church of adult ones out of both, though ordinarily more out of the Seed of the Godly. We do all believe those two Articles of our Faith, The holy Catholick Church, The Communion of Saints, unto whom belongeth forgiveness of sin, the resurrection of the Body, and everlasting life. But the circumcised Infants of carnal Israelites, and the Christened

Infants of carnal Christians seem to be Infant-Saints, and a part of the holy Catholick Church. I liken carnal Christians and false Professours within the Church, to an adulterous, undivorced Wife. It is in the Husbands power to put her away. But if he, for reasons known to himself, do yet retain her, she hath right to bed and board with him, and the Children born of her must be taken for legitimate, and inherit as the Sons of the most chast Wife. For *partus sequitur ventrem.* I stretch not the Simile to all points. But as to the main point in Controversie it will hold. Mankind is now governed by a Law of Grace. Christ hath tasted death for every man, and hath died for all, and is the propitiation for the sins of the whole World. He is become a second *Adam*, and a recovering, supernatural Root and Saviour to all Believers, and their Seed. Now though the Infants of carnal Israelites and Christians are not the natural Seed of the Godly, yet in many respects they are less sinful and guilty, than the most godly grown persons are. *Rom.* 9. 6, 7, 8. *They are not all* Israel, *which are of* Israel: *neither because they are the seed of* Abraham *are they all Children: but in* Isaac *shall thy Seed be called. That is, they which are the Children of the Flesh, these are not the Children of God; but the Children of the promise are counted for the Seed. Gal.* 3. 16. *To* Abraham *and his Seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to Seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ.* Now the Infants of bad parents in some sort, as well as of good parents seem to be the Seed of Christ and *Abraham* in respect

reſpect of their preſent natural incapacity to know good or evil, and to conſent to, or break his Covenant; and in reſpect of their freedom from all actual ſin, in which reſpect they are more innocent than the moſt holy man in the World, and becauſe Chriſt hath made it the indiſpenſable duty of all that will be ſaved to be converted, and become as little Children, humble, meek, dead to the World, harmleſs. If God for the ſake of Chriſt do pardon groſs, flagitious Sinners, who have been guilty of moſt foul, enormous ſins, and many years rebellion and impenitency, upon their ſincere, though imperfect repentance, and can take complacency in them, though they have a great deal of remaining unmortified Corruption, and in the moment of their diſſolution do away all their ſin, and perfect them in holineſs, and receive them to glory; we may hope he will do the like by Infants who never ſinned, ſave in their Parents, and what vicious nature they have, they have not from themſelves, but from their Parents. When there was a Proverb in *Iſrael, The Fathers have eaten ſowr Grapes, and the Childrens teeth are ſet on edge*; the Lord preſently takes notice of it, and ſolemnly proteſts by the Prophet, *Ye ſhall not have occaſion any more to uſe this Proverb in Iſrael. Behold, all ſoals are mine, as the ſoul of the Father, ſo alſo the ſoul of the Son is mine. The ſoul that ſinneth, it ſhall die. The righteouſneſs of the righteous ſhall be upon him, and the wickedneſs of the wicked ſhall be upon him*, Ezek. 18. Now this muſt needs mean eternal death. For in *Adam* all die, even the godly themſelves.

For Christ came not to free us from temporal death and calamities, but from death everlasting. Therefore they seem to erre which say this place speaketh directly of temporal Judgments, as the learned and holy Mr. *Durham* upon the second Commandment, for one. Whereas others say, That this Text in *Ezekiel* speaketh not of Infants, but only of Children grown up, who be capable of imitating or not imitating their parents. As to that two things may be answered, First, That the Text speaketh expresly of all Souls, and Infants certainly have Souls. Secondly, The scope of the Text is to declare the equity of God, and the equality of his ways in dealing with all persons, and to remove all occasion of that forenamed Proverb. But now if Parents impenitency turn to the everlasting perdition of their Infants, how is that Proverb removed? are not the Childrens teeth set on edg? We are not to speak wickedly for God. The Scripture maketh mention but of two *Adams*, the First, and the Second, the one is called the first man, the other is called the second man, *Rom.* 5. 1 *Cor.* 15. These two are as the Heads or Roots of Mankind; the one is a natural, destroying, and undoing Head and Root to all his Offspring; the other is a supernatural, recovering and saving Head and Root to all his Offspring. Now Infants (as hath been said) by reason of their innocent, harmless state seem to be Christs Offspring, and to be a subordinate root and bottom to themselves, and to stand by their own innocency under Christ, and by his Divine Grace. For where sin hath abounded, Grace hath much

more

more abounded. Look what regeneration is to the adult, that in ſome ſort the Infant-ſtate may be to Infants: that is, all Infants are in a new and ſecond ſtate by Chriſt. So the Word Regeneration doth properly import, as ſaith Dr. *Hammond* in his Notes upon *Mat.* 19. 28. And further, if the impenitent parent be a root of deſtruction to his Infant, then ſo many impenitent parents, ſo many deſtroying *Adams*, whereas the Scripture ſeems to make but one. And then alſo it may happen that the Infant ſhall be a Branch to two repugnant contrary Roots, and ſo be both ſaved and not ſaved. As when the Father is ungodly, and the Mother is godly, which happens not ſeldome, the Child born of them is equally a Branch to them both, and they both are equally a Root to it. But if Infants ſtand or fall with their Parents, then the Infants of ſuch Parents ſhall both ſtand and fall, and be both ſaved and not ſaved. As for ſeminal holineſs, the Infants of godly perſons cannot be proved to have it. Multitudes of them prove wicked and periſh, and of thoſe of them that are converted, many of them are not converted till after many years courſe of ſin, and practiſing carnality and ungodlineſs, which would not have been, had they been ſeminally and *radicitus* holy from the Womb. As for the ſecond Commandment, many Expoſitors (as Dr. *Willet* upon *Exod.* 20. ſhews) and Divines do hold, that thoſe Words, *Of them that hate me*, are not to be reſtrained to the Fathers only, but they extend even to Children grown up, who do in their own perſons hate God. And notwithſtanding

this

this Scripture the Infants of carnal Iſraelites were, by Gods command and approbation, circumciſed. No doubt but Infants may be, and are often, great Gainers by their Parents Faith and Godlineſs; as alſo they may be, and often are, great Loſers and Sufferers by their Parents Ungodlineſs. But no godlineſs of parents will avail to the ſalvation of any one Infant without Chriſt; and Chriſt alone, without parents godlineſs, is able by his Grace to ſecure the ſalvation of all the Infant-World. As Children are much beholden to parents, ſo for the ſake of Infants God affords many bleſſings and mercies to parents. They are the Seed of the Church, and of Mankind. They are a protection to Families, Cities, and Kingdoms. *They have their Angels, which do always behold the face of God,* Mat. 18. 10. *Should not I ſpare Niniveh that great City, wherein are more than ſixſcore thouſand perſons, that cannot diſcern between their right hand and their left hand?* Jon. 4. 11.

Object. 1. *What advantage then hath the Jew and Chriſtian? and what profit is there of Circumciſion and Baptiſm?* Anſw. *Much every way: Chiefly becauſe that unto them were and are committed the Oracles of God,* Rom. 3. 1, 2.

Object. 2. *You make no difference then between Infants within and without the Church, dying in Infancy, as to certainty of Salvation.* *Anſw.* I had rather believe the certain Salvation of all Infants than of none. I am not able to prove that the bare having of Circumciſion and Baptiſm doth ſave any: nor that the bare want thereof doth barre any from Salvation. There was a time

when

when Circumciſion was not. And when it was, it was only enjoined to the Males. God did not ſeek to deſtroy *Moſes*'s Infant for the want of Circumciſion, but only *Moſes* himſelf for omitting to do it in the due time, *Exod.* 4. And that Text *Gen.* 17. 14. ought rather to be read, *He which ſhall not circumciſe his Man-Child*, &c. So readeth the Original, the Chaldee Paraphraſt, *Junius*, &c. as Dr. *Willet* upon the place ſheweth. *Behold, all Souls are mine, ſaith the Lord; the Soul that ſinneth ſhall die. In every Nation he that feareth God and worketh righteouſneſs is accepted of him.* And if all Infants as to their Souls and internal ſtate be alike before God, and there is no difference ſave what is made by the parents, I am willing to think as largely as I can of Gods Grace, and as charitably and hopefully as I can for Infants.

Object. 3. *The Apoſtle intimates two ſorts of Infants, clean and unclean,* 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. *Anſw.* The ſence of the Apoſtles Words may be this. Let not the believing Husband think that his unbelieving Wife is unclean and polluted to him. Nor let the believing Wife think that her unbelieving Husband is unclean and polluted to her. For *to the pure all things are pure*, and to the clean and holy, all things are clean and holy, as Marriage, Children, Meat, Drink, Cloaths, *&c. But to the unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conſcience is defiled.*

Object. 4. *It were then good to kill Infants, and ſo ſecure their ſalvation, whereas if they live it is to be feared multitudes of them will prove wicked, and periſh.* *Anſw.* If there be no Infants, there can be

be no Men, and ſo no Church nor World, and ſo there will be none to be ſaved, and Chriſt himſelf would not have been born into the World. It is moſt certain that if you kill all the godly perſons throughout Chriſtendome, you will do them great kindneſs, by freeing them from all evil, and paſſing them into Glory by the way of Martyrdom. But you would take the readieſt way to your own deſtruction, you would highly diſpleaſe God, and go againſt his Glory and Intereſt and the good of Mankind.

Object. 5. *It were then all one as to Infants to be circumciſed and baptized, or not.* *Anſw.* But it were not all one as to the parents. For *he that ſhall break one of the leaſt of Gods Commands, and teach men ſo, he ſhall be called leaſt in the Kingdome of Heaven*, Mat. 5. If God bid *Ahaz* to ask a ſign, and he refuſe, in his blindneſs thinking it to be a tempting of God, God will impute ſin to him, and reckon with him for it, *Iſai.* 7. 10, 11, 12, 13. Circumciſion and Baptiſm are Seals of the Covenant. We all do need all the helps and means of Gods ordaining. But neither is it all one as to Infants to have or not to have the token of the Covenant. For thereby the Infant is adjured and ſworn to God, and lies under a ſolemn Vow and Obligation to ſerve the Lord; and God that hath called the Infant hereto by his Parents and Owners, intends him good, and no harm. But I ſhall remember the old Rule, *Ita fugias ne præter ratam.* Let the caſe and ſtate of Heathen Infants remain with God. I do but ſhew my opinion, impoſing it upon none. I my ſelf have ſometime thought otherwiſe. But I cannot ſee

but

but that all Infants have right to Baptiſm both before God and the Church, who by willing profeſſing Parents and Owners are brought unto him and to his Miniſters, as thoſe in the Goſpel were, *Mar.* 10. *Them that come unto Chriſt, he will in no caſe caſt out*, Joh. 6. Infants cannot come, unleſs ſome one bring them. If their parents bring them, and deſire Chriſts Baptiſm, Bleſſing, and Salvation for their Infants, and ſhall enter them into the holy Covenant, he will not put them by, but gladly embrace them. And therefore I conceive Mr. *Baxter's* Poſition and Diſputation againſt the Baptiſm of notoriouſly ungodly baptized parents in his Book of *Right to Sacraments* to be queſtionable. But why doth he ſay, *notoriouſly ungodly?* His arguments conclude againſt all the ungodly, both Father and Mother being ſo, although they be not notoriouſly ſo. In common ſpeaking by a notorious Sinner, we mean more than an ordinary Sinner. Every common Sinner is not a down-right Infidel or Heretick, nor inceſtuous, nor ſuch a Perſecutor of Gods Saints as was *Paul* before his Converſion, nor an inſolent Mover of Sedition, and Riſer up againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron*, as was *Corah*; and yet the Children of *Corah* were not cut off, *Numb.* 26. 11. A man may be willing of anothers Grace and Salvation, when yet he is moſt graceleſs himſelf. The rich man in Hell would have his Brethren warned that they come not into that place of torment, *Luke* 16. 28. Many a drunken, ſwearing parent will not endure thoſe vices in his Child. Chriſt doth not ſay to Miniſters and others, Go and catch as many

ny Infants of Pagans as you can, and chriſten them. He owns parents propriety. He comes not to violate the Laws of Nature, but to confirm and eſtabliſh them. And the ſence of the Common-Prayer-Book is only of thoſe Infants which in an ordinary and common way are preſented to Baptiſm by Church-people, according to the cuſtom of our own and other Churches throughout the Chriſtian World. And if we muſt go by this principle, baptize no Infants of baptized parents, Father and Mother, whoſe lives do confute their profeſſion, and who are viſible Tares, and ungodly ones, we muſt paganize a great part of the Chriſtian World, and practiſe intolerable church and ſoul-deſtroying rigour, contrary to Scripture, the words and pattern of Chriſt, the judgment and practice of the Church Univerſal unto this day: or we muſt crooken the Principle it ſelf, and ſo bend and conſtrue it as in our adminiſtrations to judge thoſe to be Wheat who are plain Tares, and thoſe to be godly who are plainly ungodly. He that juſtifieth the wicked is abomination to God, as well as he that condemneth the godly. By this means we ſhall pluck up the common ſtandard of profeſſion, which gives right to all Ordinances and Church Priviledges, and we ſhall not know where to fix. Having thus endeavoured to clear the right of all Infants born of ungodly, as well as of godly profeſſing Chriſtian Parents within the Church, to Baptiſm and to forgiveneſs of ſin, and ſalvation as ſealed thereby, I will next propound and debate this following Queſtion concerning the adult.

Whether

Whether may unconverted ones within the Church demand and receive the Lords Supper?

MAster *Baxter* ſays *flatly they may not. Right to Sacraments, pag.* 140. And in his arguments againſt Mr. *Blake* he ſays to this effect, *Prove the Lords Supper to be appointed by God for the converſion of the unconverted, and carry the Cauſe, pag.* 130. And in his Treatiſe of Confirmation, *pag.* 180. he ſays, *In their blindneſs, Gentlemen, Miniſters, and all that plead for common Church-memberſhip, pretend to be charitable to the peoples Souls, when they are exerciſing this grievous cruelty.* He means in admitting the unconverted to the Lords Supper. I muſt confeſs that till of late my conſtant judgment and teaching hath been, you ſin if you go away in your ſins, you ſin worſe if you receive in your ſins. And not being able to put by the Infants of carnal Parents from Baptiſm, nor free to admit the parents themſelves to the Lords Supper, I have for many years been ſtrugling with this thought, by what warrant can I baptize thoſe Infants in right of their Parents and upon their profeſſion of the Faith, whoſe parents I am not free to admit to the Lords Supper? On the one hand, I clearly ſaw by reaſon and experience the intolerable miſchiefs of caſting the Infants of carnal Parents out of the Church, by denying them Baptiſm. On the other hand, being led by the common Doctrine of the beſt Divines, I could not ſatisfie my ſelf that it was the duty of the unconverted to come to the Lords Supper, and

I thought

I thought it would be a prophanation of Gods Ordinance, and cruelty to ſouls, and many ways inconvenient, to admit the viſibly unconverted to it. And how to reconcile my principles and my practice in this point I found difficult; But I thought Mr. *Baxter*'s way of holding the unconverted in a ſtate of Expectants and Candidates, till by ſound Converſion they were prepared, to have feweſt inconveniences, and to be beſt for both ſides. But by ſome late Studies and Meditations I am induced to think the unconverted are to uſe the Lords Supper in concurrence with all other means as well as they can in order to Converſion, and that Miniſters are ſo to teach and admit them. And that I may not ſeem to have taken up this practical opinion upon ſleight grounds, and worldly motives, I will uprightly propound ſome of the main reaſons which prevail with my underſtanding, as not being able to reſiſt the evidence of impartial and naked truth, though I cannot owne and profeſs it without the neceſſary ſhame of honeſt and wholeſome repentance, if indeed I was in an errour before. I do not find the Scripture any where exempting the unconverted within the Church from this Duty, any more than from other publick ſtated Duties and Ordinances, but rather commanding them to do it, and threatning them if they do not. As *Numb.* 9. 13. *The man that is clean, and is not in a journey, and forbeareth to keep the Paſſeover, even the ſame Soul ſhall be cut off from his people, becauſe he brought not the Offering of the Lord in his appointed ſeaſon.* Now hence I argue, I will ſuppoſe my ſelf for the preſent

preſent in a ſtate of unconverſion, ſomething is begun, but as yet I do but ſtick in the birth, and if I die in this condition I am an undone man, there is no hope in me. I will further ſuppoſe my ſelf to be legally clean, and not in a journey, if I do not go to the Paſſeover I am to be cut off, there is then no hope of me, I am ſure to die: but if I go to the Paſſeover, and do my beſt, I can but die, there is hope I may live, and that God may ſhew mercy to my Soul. Who can tell but that as I am waiting upon God in the uſe of his own appointed means, ſighing forth my Soul for Converting Grace, it may pleaſe God to convert me, or to adde ſome further degrees of common preparatory Grace to that I have already, and carry it on to ſound and perfect Converſion in his good time? Though the unconverted be dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, yet they are not ſo dead, but that they are able in an ordinary way, through the common abilities of the Spirit, to do ſomething, and that ſomething will lead to more. They are not Stocks and Brutes, but reaſonable Creatures. And as they muſt pray, and read, and hear, and ſing Pſalms, and meditate in order to Converſion, ſo they muſt remember the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in the Lords Supper, and uſe this in concurrence with all other means, and there is more hope when all Chriſts publick means are impartially uſed, than when but ſome only are uſed. Even *Simon Magus, whoſe heart was not right in the ſight of God, muſt repent, and pray God if perhaps the thought of his heart may be forgiven him*, Act. 8. and unconverted ones muſt pray for Converſion, and ſay unto God,

Turn thou us, and we ſhall be turned. They muſt pray for that Grace which they want, and uſe that which they have already, and it ſhall not be in vain to them. God will not blame them ſo far as they do well. There is no ſin in doing the outward action. All the ſin lies in the inward defect, the ſame as in hearing, ſinging, praying. All Chriſts means are healing and medicinal, and it is the unconverted who have moſt need; if Sinners do their part, God will do his. The ſubſtance of the matter is holy vowing and covenanting their Souls to God. Now ſaith the Wiſe Man, *Eccl.* 5. 5. *It is better not to vow, than that thou ſhouldeſt vow and not perform.* So ſay I. But when thou mayeſt do both, thou art to omit neither. Vow none, and there is no hope of thee, thou art a dead man. Vow thy Soul to God, and lye at the feet of his mercy, and do thy part as well as thou canſt, and there is hope. It is thy abſolute duty to be Gods devoted, faithful Servant, thy after non-performance doth not make thy Vowing ſinful, though the ſin is aggravated by the Vow. If the Lords Supper be a confirming Ordinance, it muſt needs be converting. For all Confirmation is by Converſion from weakneſs to ſtrength, from a leſs to a greater meaſure of Faith, Wiſdom, Hope, Love, Sincerity, *&c.* It is but one and the ſame truths differently managed, which are converting to one, and confirming to another. They cannot be one, but they muſt needs be both. For the Lords Supper is as a Seal or Appendix faſtened to the Word. As is the Word, ſo is the Seal to which it is annexed. If the Word be converting,

ing, and do chiefly beſpeak Converſion, and preſenteth thoſe truths to the underſtanding which have the moſt apt and proper tendency to convert, then the Seal or Appendix added to it muſt needs, as concurrent with the Word, be uſeful for Converſion; and rather for Converſion than for Confirmation, becauſe the one is of abſolute neceſſity to Salvation, ſo is not the other. In preaching there is only the bare Word: In the Lords Supper there is included or preſuppoſed the Word together with a viſible Seal or Appendix, the one preacheth to the ear, the other, as concurrent with the Word, preacheth to the eye, and both have a ſuitable tendency to pierce and affect the heart; the Word properly and principally as the moſt prime and ſtated inſtrument of the Spirit, and directly ſuited for Converſion and Confirmation; the outward Elements only as conjunct with the Word, receiving all their ſanction from the Word, which being ſoundly believed cauſeth the Bread and Wine as holy Elements, with the eating and drinking conſidered as Sacramental, relative actions, to help forward the Word, according to that in *Lam.* 3.51. *Mine eye affecteth mine heart*; and ſo my taſt and feeling affect my heart. Object. *Paul* ſaith, *Chriſt ſent me not to baptize, but to preach the Goſpel*, poſtponing Baptiſm to Preaching. *Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God*; not by bodily eating and drinking, nor by mere outward waſhing. *Anſw.* I ſay ſo too. It is the Word all along which is both converting and confirming. Mere eating and drinking hath neither good nor evil in it; *For neither if we eat*

are we the better; neither if we eat not are we the worſe. It is not meat which commendeth us to God. In this ſence the Elements are nothing, they are but as other Bread and Wine, neither confirming nor converting, and both alike. But conſidered as ſacred appendices, and viſible tokens of Gods ordaining, and a Seal of the Covenant, ſo they are uſeful both for Converſion and Confirmation, and rather for Converſion than Confirmation, becauſe of its flat indiſpenſable neceſſity. If thou be ſincere and die in the faith, this is unto thee a Seal of forgiveneſs and eternal Salvation: But if thou be perfidious, and dye in thy ſins, it is unto thee a Seal of eternal Damnation. This is plainly both converting and confirming.

It is true, he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation or judgment to himſelf, not diſcerning the Lords Body. It is alſo as true, that he that refuſeth to eat and drink worthily, forbeareth to eat and drink Life eternal to himſelf, turning from the Lords Body. *There is no peace, ſaith God, to the wicked*: but there is more hope of one that will uſe the means, than of another that will not; and of one that will uſe all, than of another that will uſe but ſome. Experience proves that many have been converted by means of the Sacrament, and it is ſeldome ſeen but that thoſe who profit by other publick means, do alſo profit by this. *Object.* Many have been converted by occaſion of their ſinful manner of receiving; but few or none by mere receiving. *Anſw.* It is not, as I ſaid before, the mere outward Elements

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conſidered barely in themſelves, nor mere outward eating and geſture, which do either convert or confirm; nor is any mans ſin a proper means of Converſion. Sin as ſuch is contrary to Converſion. But it is Gods Word duly thought upon, and the application thereof to the heart and conſcience, by the Sinner himſelf through the Grace of the Holy Ghoſt, which cauſeth Converſion. The Conſcience of ſuch a man cannot ſmite him for doing the outward action. So far is well. There is a great difference between doing a thing flatly forbidden of God, as Lying, Murther, *&c.* and doing a thing flatly commanded of God in a defective manner. The Scripture ſorting all men into good and bad, maketh him that ſacrificeth to be the good, and him that ſacrificeth not to be the bad, *Eccl.* 9. 2. *O Judah, keep thy ſolemn Feaſts, perform thy vows, Nah.* 1. 15. do both. In this ſence Sacrifice is Obedience, it is the thing required. God will not diſpenſe with the omiſſion of it. It is better to do all the outward part, and ſome of the inward as much as you can, than to do juſt nothing at all. A mans miſery hereafter will not be the greater for what Service and Obedience he did to God in this World; but rather it will be ſome eaſe to him, and a mitigation of his torment ſo far as he was good and obedient in this World. For God will render to every man according to his Works. The want of inward ſincerity will be a torment: but the remembrance of common honeſty and ſimplicity will be rather eaſe than torment. *Deut.* 5. 27, 28, 29. *The people ſay to Moſes, Speak thou unto*

us from God all that he ſhall ſpeak unto thee, and we will hear it and do it. And the Lord heard it, and ſaid, They have well ſaid all that they have ſpoken. O that there were ſuch an heart in them to fear me always for their good. Mark here, the people profeſs and covenant themſelves to God. God ſaw their hearts not to be right and ſtedfaſt in his Covenant, *Pſal.* 78. 37. yet he well approves their outward covenanting and profeſſion. See alſo to the ſame purpoſe, 2 *Chr.* 25. 3. *Jer.* 34. 15, 16, 17, 18. *Jam.* 2. 19. *Gen.* 4. 7. *Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure: but even their mind and conſcience is defiled,* Tit. 1. 15. But they do only defile things to themſelves, and they do no more defile the Sacrament to themſelves, than they do other publick Ordinances. There where God is ſaid *to hate the multitude of their Sacrifices and Oblations,* he is ſaid *to hate their New Moons, and Sabbaths, and calling of Aſſemblies. It is iniquity even the ſolemn meeting. When ye ſpread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood,* Iſai. 1. 11, 12, 13, 14. *Unto the wicked God ſaith, What haſt thou to do to declare my Statutes, or that thou ſhouldſt take my Covenant in thy mouth? ſeeing thou hateſt inſtruction, and caſteſt my words behind thee?* Pſal. 50. 16, 17. *He that turneth away his ear from hearing the Law, even his prayer ſhall be abomination,* Prov. 28. 9. compared with *Prov.* 15. 8. *The Sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but the prayer of the upright is his delight.* The oppoſition between Prayer and Sacrifice ſhews that there

there is the same reason of both, that is, where Prayer is abomination, so is Sacrifice; and where Sacrifice is abomination, so is Prayer. *Joh.* 9. 31. *We know that God heareth not Sinners: but if any man be a Worshipper of God, and doth his Will, him he heareth.* From all which Scriptures, and many more which might be cited, it seems evident, that there is one and the same reason of hearing, praying, Sacrifice and Sacraments. Now our most eminent practical Divines do well allow unconverted mens hearing and praying, distinguishing between resolved and returning Sinners, why then not their coming to the Sacrament? I deny not but that there is a difference between simply natural Worship and Duties which lye open to all, and all must use; and instituted Worship, as Sacrifices and the Sacraments which are for those within the Church only, and are not converting by themselves, nor have they any such intrinsecal aptitude so as the Word and Prayer have, and therefore they may better be forborn. *God will have mercy rather than Sacrifice. To obey is better than Sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of Rams. The Lord hath not as great delight in burnt Offerings and Sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord,* 1 Sam. 15. 22. *The Sacrifice of God is a broken and contrite heart, and not slain Beasts,* Psal. 51. *To do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God, this is that which God requires and is mans duty, rather than thousands of Rams, or ten thousands of Rivers of Oil, or multitudes of burnt Offerings, and Calves of a year old,* Micah 6. 6, 7, 8. *Circumcision is that of the heart,* Rom. 2.

And therefore in one ſence Sacraments are the leaſt and ſmalleſt part of our Religion, and to give too much to them may be dangerous. They are but a ſecondary ſort of Service: but yet they are Divine Inſtitutions and Commandments of God; if they be fooliſhneſs and weakneſs they are the fooliſhneſs and weakneſs of God, and the fooliſhneſs and weakneſs of God is wiſer and ſtronger than men. And God hath ſeverely puniſhed the Breakers, Contemners, and Polluters of them, as our firſt Parents eating of the forbidden Tree, and the Caſe of *Nadab* and *Abihu*, *Uzza*, *Uzziah*, *Saul*, *Eli* and his Sons, *Jeroboam*, and others, do abundantly teſtifie; ſo alſo *Moſes*'s neglect to circumciſe his Child. Where Sacrifice and Mercy may both be had, they are not to be ſundred. God will diſpenſe with neither. And all along from the time of *Cain* and *Abel* through every Age of the Scripture, Hypocrites and carnal Perſons have been admitted to Sacrifice as well as ſincere Worſhippers, and that by Gods warrant and approbation. It is but a ſecondary ſervice in both, and that it is, and as ſuch it is to be done by all adult ones within the Church. There is no ſin in the outward doing. And it is as truly converting as confirming in its own nature, and both alike, yea rather as hath been ſaid the former. The ſubſtance of the matter is godlineſs, ſincerity, covenanting with God inwardly, heart-worſhip, repentance, juſtice, and mercy. The Sacrament in its own nature is a Sign or Token of all theſe. And where theſe are wanting it is abomination to God. But wherein lies the abomination?

mination? In the evil mind and intentions of the party, not in the outward act and duty. And the inward mind is the ſame before God in all duties, and as is the inward mind ſo is all external ſervice to God. But the unconverted are to uſe the means of Gods appointment for their Converſion, as reading, hearing, praying, meditation, ſinging Gods Pſalms; and with them they are to uſe the Lords Supper, not as a primary means of Converſion, not as having any intrinſecal aptitude to convert without the Word, or having any power to heal the Soul as a Plaiſter hath to heal a Wound in the Body: but they are to uſe it as a token of the Covenant between God and them, as a Sacramental relative action, obliging God to them if they be ſincere to reward and bleſs them, if they be otherwiſe and die in their ſins, it is a Seal of damnation. So that it is the Word all along, and the *res Sacramenti*, the thing imported by the outward Elements and viſible carnal Sacramental actions, which is both converting and confirming; as for the outward eating, it is in it ſelf but as other common eating. But ſignificatively it hath equal force to convert and confirm, according to the diſpoſition of the receiver. A Sinner may bethink him as he is at the Lords Table, If my heart be not right and ſincere, what a caſe am I in? As ſure as I eat this Bread and drink this Wine, it will be life eternal to me if I be ſincere, and death eternal if I be unconverted and dye ſo. Now theſe inward thoughts are the Inſtruments of the Spirit for Converſion, and it is a ſign that God is at work in that Soul, and who knows,

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what mortal man can tell what God may do? Is the Spirit of the Lord ſtraitned? Can any bind up the hands of God? May not a Sinner plead with God in his heart by inward heart-cries? All thoſe reaſonings, and humble expoſtulations and arguments which he may plead with God in prayer for Converſion, Pardon, and ſaving Grace; he may plead with God in his Soul at the Sacrament. The Sacrament is no Bar to him. He hath a prize put into his hands, if he have but a heart to uſe it. Common Grace is better than none, and common worthineſs and communicating is better than none. If men will not honour God with their Inſides, he will have them to honour him with their outſides, *Mat.* 15. 8. Outward Worſhip is an honour to God. He will not diſpenſe with it. His Law is holy, juſt, and good. This is his Law, *Do this in remembrance of me.* Mans ſin cannot make void Gods Law. Their inward defect ſhall turn to their own ſhame and condemnation. Their outward action and profeſſion ſhall turn to Gods Glory, and their own eaſe and benefit. Only one thing is to be cautioned from *Prov.* 21. 27. *The Sacrifice of the wicked is abomination: how much more when he bringeth it with a wicked mind!* A wicked man may receive the Sacrament, and yet in ſome ſort not with a wicked mind, that is, not with a particular, groſs, evil thought or intention to do ſome ſpecial wickedneſs, as when Papiſts take the Sacrament as a Bond of Secrecy when there is ſome wicked Deſign in hand, as to murther Proteſtants; or when a man comes to the Sacrament with a particular groſs intention, like the Whore

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in *Prov.* 7. 14. *This day I have paid my vows.* I have done ſuch and ſuch ſins, I'll go to the Sacrament, and by a feigned repentance and outward receiving make God amends for all that is paſt, and ſo knock off the old ſcore, and begin anew and ſin more freely. Such kind of thoughts are horrible, and ſuch kind of receiving is double abomination to God. But the Doctrine of the Sacrament is to be plainly taught and expounded to the people, and they are to be warned not to omit the outward Duty, nor to do it to their greater diſadvantage; if they find themſelves to be unconverted, they are penitently to uſe it as a concurrent means of Converſion. If they have done any particular wrong to their neighbour, and ſhall at the Sacrament remember that he hath ſomething againſt them, they muſt ſtop themſelves from preſent communicating, and go their way, and firſt be reconciled to their Brother, and then come to the Sacrament, *Mat.* 5. 23, 24. I do not by my receiving of the Sacrament ſay that my heart is ſincere, I ſay it is my duty to be ſincere, and I can have no excuſe if I be not: but I am willing to obey Gods Command outwardly, *Do this in remembrance of me*, and to do the inward part as well as I can, thinking it may be better to do ſo than wholly forbear, and to caſt my ſelf at the feet of Gods grace and mercy for Converſion if I have it not, and for Confirmation and Aſſurance if indeed I am already converted. Salvation, and ſo Gods Ordinances, lies at mens doors. *Whoſoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely*, Rev. 22. 17. Miniſters are but Stewards of Gods Ordinances.

dinances. We are to ſet the Sacrament before them, and open to them the Doctrine thereof. Sinners, here is life and death ſet before you. God will require at all your hands ſincere Faith and Repentance. He will not be dallied with. Refuſe to vow and covenant your Souls to God, and there is no hope of you. In your unconverted ſtate you cannot communicate ſincerely, no more can you pray ſincerely. But unleſs you have a mind to go knowingly and wilfully to Hell, and to do nothing for Heaven and your Soul, you are to conſider and bethink you that yet there is hope, God hath ordained you means, though you cannot uſe them as the converted can, yet you are Men and Women, and baptized ſworn Chriſtians, you may do ſomething in prayer, ſomething in hearing, ſomething at the Sacrament; ſomething for Heaven and Eternity is a great matter, an inward thought or groan is conſiderable. If you mean to live as Chriſtians, the Ordinance is before you, Chriſt invites you, Come, but come ſincerely; if you cannot come throughout converted, come with your beſt deſires after Converſion, be ſenſible of ſin, and fly to Chriſt as a merciful Phyſician and Saviour to loſt Souls, and caſt your ſelves at his feet, and if you muſt periſh, periſh repenting, praying, crying for mercy, doing what you can, and aſſuredly you ſhall be no loſers. But if you be utterly reſolved to be ungodly, carnal I am, and carnal I mean to be, and I come to the Sacrament but in pretence to diſguiſe my ſordid Soul with this Cover, intending henceforth to be the more licentious; get you

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hence, there is nothing here for any ſuch. Striving, returning Sinners may peradventure find mercy with God, but groſs, reſolved Sinners are in the way of Gods indignation. If any man have ſuch an evil Conſcience, and prevalent, noted, groſs reſolution and intention, in no wiſe come. But if you will needs come, the Ordinance is not mine but Chriſts, you are within the Church, you profeſs Chriſtianity, I know not your heart, I ſet the Ordinance before you, if you take it with any ſuch heart and intention, it is your ſin, not mine. If ought befall you, I will be clear from your blood.

Whether a Miniſter may put from the Sacrament thoſe of his Pariſh who be chriſtened People, and come to Church, and join in Publick Worſhip, and tender themſelves to receive, being under no Sentence of Excommunication.

IN the general I conceive, He may not. My main Reaſon is, Becauſe he is not Lord of the Sacrament, but a Steward only, and therefore is bound not to do his own will, but the will of Chriſt. Now this is Chriſts Will, That holy things and pearls are not to be denied, ſave to Dogs and Swine, ſuch as will trample them under foot, and turn again and rent the Givers, *Mat.* 7. 6. But ſuch as now I ſpeak of are no ſuch Dogs and Swine. I have before proved that the Sacrament is to be uſed by unconverted ones within the Church, as a concurrent means of Converſion; and that it may be ſo uſed, and they are obliged ſo

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to do; and therefore Miniſters are rather to draw them to Chriſt and to it, than debarr them from it. No man may uſe it as a means of impenitency againſt Chriſt and his Soul; but as helpful to repentance and ſalvation it is to be uſed, and as a Service enjoined by God, the doing whereof is Glory to him. If we go according to Gods Word, *Numb.* 9. 14. we ought rather to denounce to people their ſin and danger, if they do not receive. It is the Miniſters part to prepare the Ordinance, and to ſet it before the people, and to leave it at their door whether to have it or not. If they will not have it, none can compel them. If they be minded to have it, Chriſts Goſpel is, *Whoſoever will, let him take the water of life freely*, Rev. 22. 17. *Him that cometh unto me I will in no wiſe caſt out*, Joh. 6. 37. If the people being chriſtened do make a credible profeſſion of true Chriſtianity, or a profeſſion of true Chriſtianity which we cannot prove to be falſe, at leaſt by a violent preſumption (as the Lawyers ſpeak) we muſt accept their profeſſion, and admit them. So much Mr. *Baxter* yields, *Treatiſe of Confirmation*, *pag.* 76, 77. Now how can we upon a Sacrament Day, in the midſt of Church-Service, try the perſons we ſuſpect, and charge them with falſhood and lying profeſſion, and by ſubſtantial evidence prove them one by one to be Hypocrites and Diſſemblers? We muſt not condemn perſons unheard, unconvicted. One Witneſs, though never ſo honeſt, is not ſufficient to take away a mans life. The Miniſter is but one Witneſs. His ſingle teſtimony is not ſufficient. A mans own Confeſ-

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ſion may be enough to his own Condemnation; but his ſingle Evidence cannot avail to anothers Condemnation. Jeſus Chriſt hath ſet a juſt and equal ſtandard between Paſtor and People, *If thou believeſt with all thine heart, thou mayſt be baptized*, Act. 8. 37. And being baptized, thou mayſt come to the Lords Supper. If thou have been careleſs and carnal, if now thou be ſincerely penitent, thy ſin is pardoned, and thou haſt right to ſalvation, and mayſt come to the Lords Table, thou art bound to come with thy beſt deſires after that Grace which thou wanteſt. This is the Standard. What the mans heart is, none but himſelf and the heart-ſearching God do know. All that the Miniſter hath to do is to ſet before him the Ordinance, acquaint him with his Duty, provoke him by juſt reaſons and motives to his Duty, and judge upon his profeſſion. If it want all the Integrals and Ornamentals, yet while it hath all the Eſſentials, it may not be rejected. But ſaith Mr. *Baxter*, *Ib. pag.* 78. *An incredible perſon muſt evidence his profeſſion to be true, by probable evidences, that ſhall make it credible. A perfidious Covenant-Breaker hath forfeited his credit, and therefore muſt ſhew us a new life, as well as a verbal profeſſion, before he is to be reſtored to his privileges.* But I humbly conceive that this is to go from the common Standard, and that, as to admiſſion to the Sacrament, juſt profeſſion whether by word or overt acts, is *ipſo jure* its own evidence, and that no mans credit is abſolutely forfeited while in this World, and there is room and ſpace for repentance. Sincere repentance and pardon ſet the Soul ſtraight, and

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open the door of Heaven. The juſt profeſſion thereof gives right to abſolution before the Church, and it is not to be diſproved by former wickedneſs and ſcandals, but by after perfidiouſneſs and acts of ungodlineſs, which having no preſent exiſtence, can be no Bar to his preſent claim. The penitent Thief upon the Croſs could give you no other evidences but preſent profeſſion. When you be at the Lords Table to give the Sacrament, and the Congregation is mixt of Tares and Wheat, it may be ſome hundreds of ſuſpected ones ſhall preſent themſelves to receive, how do you prove theſe perſons one by one to be incredible, and to be mere Diſſemblers in their preſent profeſſion? Can all their former ſcandals barre them from preſent ſincere repentance? If they offer you viſible proof and evidence, it lies upon you to diſprove it. If they ſhall ſtand for their right, you muſt grant it or diſprove it inſtantly, you muſt take off their produced claim, and evidence by viſible, æquilibrious, yea preponderating, evidence, and that inſtantly. There is no room for ſuſpenſion, where a man hath no time to deliberate, but is called upon by inſtant neceſſity to ſay yea or no, to conſent or not conſent, to acquit or condemn. But here the man ſtands for his right, and is inſtant for the ſentence, what ſhall be his doom, whether you will admit him or no. If you do not admit him, you do *ipſo facto* eminently or virtually excommunicate him, and declare him a Dog, unto whom ſuch Pearls do not belong. If you ſtay for further tryal and evidence, it is as if you ſhould firſt hang a man,

and

and then try him. I well apprehend what you will object, and with what inconveniencies you will preſs me. But alſo I do with ſubmiſſion conceive you cannot overthrow what I have ſaid, and that when you have run the matter to the furtheſt, you muſt come to Chriſts plain Words, Pluck not up the Tares, leſt you pluck up the Wheat alſo, *Mat.* 13. 34, *&c.* The Tares were as viſible as the Wheat, the Servants were forward to have pluckt them up. No, ſaith Chriſt, let them alone, let both grow till the Harveſt. Theſe Tares are not the Briars and Thorns which grow in the wild waſte or foreſt, mere Pagans and perſons without the Church, but viſible Hypocrites and falſe Profeſſors within the Church, having a form of Godlineſs, but denying the power thereof. To pluck them up is either by the Sword of the Magiſtrate, or by the Excommunication of the Paſtor. Chriſt plainly forbids both, and therefore we his Servants are to obey his Law, and be content to be no more wiſe and holy than God. If we go from our Standard, we go from ſure footing, and know not where to fix. We muſt be prudent and conſcientious, avoiding the Extreams of over-laxneſs and rigour, keeping in the juſt Mean as near as we can, and if we muſt erre, let it be on the charitable hand. Let Paſtors watch over their people publickly, privately, let them warn, inſtruct, exhort, and comfort every one night and day with tears, let us by ſound Doctrine difference between the Tares and the Wheat, the weak and the ſtrong, and give to every one his portion in due ſeaſon, and lead convincing,

heavenly lives, and pleaſe our people in all things for their good. And let the people reverence and eſteem their faithful Paſtors, and be ruled and counſelled by them for their good, and be ready always to give an anſwer to them, if they ſhall ask them a reaſon of the hope that is in them, with meekneſs and fear. But let us not in the Name of Chriſt ſet up Church-tyranny, and diſcourage and publickly diſgrace and ſhame our people, and lay temptations before the weak, and cut off whole Towns and Pariſhes by cruel anathematizing ſentence, as Dogs and Swine, and Members of Satan, without lawful Tryal and Conviction. Alas, it is a hard Caſe when neither you nor we can preach peace to the wicked. Receive or not receive, there is no hope of them if they die in their ſins. But when once they be under Gods Bonds, and are ſolemnly ſworn to him, Miniſters have ſome more ground againſt them, and Conſcience hath them in more awe, and they can have nothing to ſay for themſelves, if they be not ſincere. If they be ignorant it is the fault of their Wills, rather than of their Underſtandings. Light is round about them; but many love darkneſs rather than light becauſe their Deeds are evil.

Whether the common ſort of ungodly Chriſtians are to be caſt out of the Church by penal Excommunication, and uſed as excommunicate ones.

I Conceive not. I will give you ſome reaſons in Mr. *Baxter's* Words, *Treatiſe of Confirmation*,

tion, pag. 174, 175. "1. We ſhall have ſuch "a multitude to excommunicate or reject, that "it will make the Sentence grow almoſt con- "temptible by the commonneſs. 2. We ſhall "ſo extremely enrage the ſpirits of the people, "that we ſhall go in danger of our lives: A- "mong ſo many that are publickly reproved, "and caſt out, it's two to one, but ſome deſpe- "rate Villains will be ſtudying revenge. But all "this is nothing: but that which ſticks upon my "heart is this. 3. We ſhall be the cruelleſt "enemies to the Souls of our poor people in the "World: and put them the very next ſtep to "Hell. For as ſoon as ever we have rejected "them, and caſt them under publick ſhame, "they hate us to the heart, and either will ne- "ver hear us more, or hear us with ſo much ha- "tred and malice, or bitterneſs of Spirit, that "they are never like to profit by us. 4. He inti- "mates page 176. his perſwaſion, that it would "endanger a Rebellion. 5. In his Poſtſcript to "the ſame Book, he intimates, there are ſo ma- "ny Offenders weekly to be dealt with, and ſo "much time required to hear Witneſſes, and ad- "moniſh them, that it's more than he could poſ- "ſibly do. 6. I do add another reaſon of mine own, from what I have before ſaid in anſwer to the laſt Queſtion, That unleſs we will go from the common Standard of profeſſion, and pluck up the Wheat with the Tares, we ſhall not be able by legal evidence to diſprove the profeſſion of multitudes, ſo as to invalidate their claim to the Lords Supper for themſelves, and to Baptiſm for their Infants, and yet we may and muſt re-repute them viſible Tares, if their lives ſo de-

clare them, and practice, 2 *Theſſ.* 3. 6, 14, 15. and ſuch like places.

Now mark if all Mr. *Baxter*'s Reaſons do not in part recoil upon himſelf, and the way of the Independents and Presbyterians, becauſe that excluſion from the Lords Supper is *ipſo facto* excommunication eminently or virtually, though not formally. In contradiction to the foreſaid Aſſertions of his own he ſeems in divers places to maintain, That all which be *ipſo jure* excommunicate, are to be excommunicated by the Church; and that common wickedneſs doth as much cut off as hereſie; and that ſuch as *de jure* deſerve to be cut off, *de facto* are to be cut off, it is the Churches Duty to do it ſententially and executively. His only reaſon is, *It being of indiſpenſable obligation to give to all their due.* Now mark, if this reaſon hold, then all the World were undone, no Sinner could be ſaved, it were out of Gods power to ſhew mercy, and beſtow Grace upon the graceleſs and undeſerving. No King could pardon a Malefactor. *Abiathar* was worthy of Death, yet *Solomon* did well to ſpare him, 1 *Kings* 3. 26. *Abner* and the reſt of *Saul*'s Guard deſerved to die, and yet it had been an act of cruelty in *Saul*, and againſt the intereſt of the Commonwealth, to have put them to death, 1 *Sam* 26. 16. Therefore this reaſon of Mr. *Baxter*'s cannot hold good in penalties. In all other Caſes I grant it. But *pœna debetur Reipublicæ.* Alſo I grant that ſooner or later God will render to every man according to his Works. But ſtill while Sinners are alive, it

Right to Sacraments, pag. 293. *Poſtcript to Treatiſe of Confirmation. The true way of Concord, pag.* 178, 181, 182.

is

is in his power to ſhew them mercy, and he may bear with them as long as he pleaſes. And if he bear, we may well bear. Every impenitent Sinner deſerves damnation. But every impenitent Sinner is not to be hanged by the Magiſtrate, nor excommunicated by the Miniſter.

Therefore we muſt diſtinguiſh between common Sinners and more than common Sinners; between carnal Chriſtians tolerable, and carnal Chriſtians intolerable; between common crimes and offences, and rare unuſual ones; between private and open offences, between ſins deſtructive to Church-Society, and ſins but lightly prejudicial, the ſcandal whereof may be born or cured without open publication and ſhaming the Offender before all the Aſſembly. Publick Excommunication and open ſhaming of Sinners by name is an Ordinance of God in its place and ſeaſon. But it bindeth not *ad ſemper*. It is to be uſed for edification and not for deſtruction. It is ſtrong Phyſick, and if not well and wiſely applied, will kill rather than cure. The queſtion is not what is the Diſeaſe, but what is the beſt way of Cure. The Father did not make the penitent Prodigal to do open penance before all the Family. We know Chriſts gentle carriage to the Woman taken in Adultery, and to his ſleeping, tardy Diſciples, and his weeping over hard-hearted *Jeruſalem*, and compaſſion to Sinners. Of ſome we are to have compaſſion, making a difference: and others we are to ſave with fear, pulling them out of the fire, *Jude* 22, 23. It is certain that God ſaith, *If any man love not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, let him be accurſed,*

ſed, 1 *Cor.* 16. 22. yet will not this warrant us to ſingle forth all by their names, whoſe lives and fruits do betel them to want ſaving Love to Jeſus Chriſt, and publickly ſhame and diſgrace them. Though the ungodly be in one ſence practical Atheiſts, Infidels, Schiſmaticks, Hereticks, yet every common Sinner that wanteth ſaving godlineſs is not a downright Atheiſt, Infidel, Arrian, Quaker. Hereſie and impenitency are more than bare impenitency. Every common Sinner is not a Sorcerer, nor inceſtuous, nor a Perſecutor of Gods people, as ſome are. And therefore it is not ordinary and common impenitent ones which are to be excommunicated, but notorious, ſtigmatized, infamous ones, and ſuch whoſe Crimes may well be notified for a warning to all, and a juſt diſgrace of ſin. As in a Corn-field there are groſſer and ſmaller Weeds, both may be diſcerned; but it is the groſſer only which good Husband-men do uſe to pluck up. And if all were let alone, there would be ſome Corn, and better ſome, eſpecially in a time of Famine, than juſt none. If you will be ſo preciſe as to pluck up every viſible ſmall Weed, you will danger to leave no Corn. Hereſie is a ſpecial Crime, and carries a ſpecial Brand with it, and may prove infecting and ruining to the Church and Mens Souls, far more than ſimple carnality and impenitency.

Mr. *Baxter* ſays, it is not to be doubted, but that by the Wedding Garment in the Parable, *Mat.* 22. is to be underſtood ſincere Faith and Repentance, *Right to Sacraments, pag.* 129, 144. I do humbly conceive, that there is a two fold

Wedding

Wedding Garment; inward ſincerity and outward profeſſion. All ſincere Chriſtians have both inward ſincerity and external profeſſion. Many want inward ſincerity, and yet have the Wedding Garment of outward profeſſion. But there are ſome within the Church, notorious, extraordinary, branded, ſtigmatized Sinners, who want both. And this ſeems to be the caſe of that ſame man in the parable, who was caſt out. He was but one: but there were many at the Table, bad as well as good, as is plainly intimated by the parable, *ver.* 10. the bad had a Wedding Garment on as well as the good, and were equally admitted to the Wedding Feaſt. Only this one man was an Intruder, he was neither circumciſed in heart nor in fleſh, he wanted common profeſſion. He was ſome enormous capital Sinner. I dare not rely upon this interpretation, becauſe it ſeems new and ſingular. The words and ſcope of the parable guide me to it, as ſerving to expreſs unto us the ſtate of the viſible Church while in this World.

Whether Mr. Baxter's *Doctrine and Principles concerning particular Churches, be ſound and good.*

1. HIS Doctrine is, *That a particular Church is a regular part of the Univerſal Church, as a City is of a Kingdom.* In this I conceive he is out. A particular Church is to the Church Univerſal what

Chriſtian Directory, Eccleſ. Caſes, Queſt. 16. §4, 55, 56. *The true and only way of Concord, p.* 230, 232, 239, 240, 261.

a ſingle

a ſingle Town conſiſting of a Magiſtrate governing, and people governed, according to the general Rules and Principles of humane Society, is to all the World.

2. His Doctrine is, *That he that will be a Member of a particular Church muſt cohabit or dwell near.* In this I alſo conceive he is out. I grant a man cannot be a ſtated Member of any one particular Church, except he be an Inhabitant. But it is one thing to be a Member for ſome time, another thing to be a ſtated ordinary Member. A Sojourner being a Chriſtian, and coming to a particular Church to worſhip God as a Chriſtian Man, in the unity of the Church Univerſal, while he ſhall carry himſelf as a Chriſtian, hath right to be admitted, uſed, and treated as a Chriſtian by the Paſtor and people of that place, and not as a Pagan. With what Church a Chriſtian Man ſhall join in publick Worſhip, he is for the time a Member thereof.

3. His Doctrine is, *That to the being of a particular Church there is neceſſary a mutual Covenant or expreſſed Conſent between Paſtor and People, even every Member thereof, and the more expreſs it is, the better it is.* And he defines a particular Church, *to be a Society of Chriſtians, conſiſting of Paſtor and People, aſſociated by conſent,* &c. *And if any man ſhall intrude into their communion and priviledges, without expreſſing his conſent before-hand to be a Member thereof, and to ſubmit to the guidance and overſight of the Paſtor, he is to be taken for an Invader.* In this alſo I conceive he is out. I do well grant that no man can be a Paſtor to a people

people againſt their will. Nor can any people compel another to be a Paſtor to them againſt his will. But as Chriſt is Chriſt, and a Saviour by Office whether Sinners will or no, ſo faithful Miniſters are Paſtors and Miniſters by Office, whether the people accept them or no, *Mat.* 10. 14, 15. There can be no Chriſtianity without conſent, and where there is nothing of Chriſtianity there is no Church. But no more is neceſſary to the being or well being of a particular Church than this, *A company of Chriſtians met together in publick for the ſolemn Worſhip of God by Jeſus Chriſt, having a Paſtor or Miniſter with them to guide and govern the Congregation, and edifie himſelf and them by the Word and Sacraments.* So that, where there is a publick Aſſembly of Chriſtians, Miniſter and people, met together for the ſolemn Worſhip of God by Jeſus Chriſt, and publick Chriſtian Communion, there is a true particular Church in the moſt plain and common ſence; any more is more than is neceſſary, and is a departing from the ſimplicity that is in Chriſt. And I would but ask Mr. *Baxter*, What it is that you mean by thoſe Words in your definition, *aſſociated by conſent?* Either you mean bare aſſembling, or ſome other thing. If the former, your Words are improper and æquivocal, and not fit to be put into a definition. If the latter, you leave out the eſſence of a particular Church. For where there is no Aſſembly of Paſtor and people, there is no Church, and no longer than the Aſſembly laſteth are they a Church. Therefore we do in common ſpeaking call it going to Church, and coming from the

the Church, and being in the Church, meaning thereby the place where Christians, Pastor, and people do use to meet for the solemn publick Worship of God, and their assembling together there for that intent. When the Assembly is broke up, the Church for that time ceaseth till the meeting be renewed, till which time they remain Christian Inhabitants, Neighbours, Families, Parishioners, or Sojourners, the Pastor of the place dwelling among them, *Act.* 13. 43, 44. 1 *Cor.* 14. 34, 35. Is Mr. *Baxter* an invader when he comes to a Conforming Church, and joins in the publick Worship as a Christian Man in the unity of the Church Universal, because he did not before-hand covenant himself to the conforming Pastor, and express his consent to all the Orders, Rules and Rites observed by the Conforming Pastor in his administrations? Doth he think it a piece of Church-tyranny in the Bishops to require from Presbyters and Deacons an oath or promise of Canonical Obedience to the Bishops, though but in things lawful and honest; and now would he have an oath or promise of Canonical Duty between every Minister and people before the Congregation begin, or during the time of administration? As when I go to the Bishop for Ordination, and am ordained by him, I do not hereby particularly swear or promise Canonical Obedience to him, and yet I cannot be a Christian and ordained by him a Minister, but I must needs owne and submit to his Episcopal Authoritie, and stand bound to do all Duty to him and to all others. So when I go in the simplicity

of

of my heart to this or that particular Church to worſhip the true God by Jeſus Chriſt, in the unity of the Church Univerſal and of that particular Church, I do not hereby particularly ſwear or promiſe Canonical Duty to the Paſtor, or covenant my ſelf particularly to him; and yet I cannot be a Chriſtian Man, and faithfully do my Duty, but I muſt needs be obedient to the Doctrine which he ſhall teach me from Gods Word, and in receiving the Sacrament, and joining with the Congregation in prayer and praiſe for the time I am there, behave my ſelf chriſtianly, and ſtand bound to perform all Duty to Chriſt, and to all Chriſtian Paſtors and people throughout the World. Worldly Cities and Corporations, beſides the Oath of Allegiance, common to all Subjects, have their particular City and Corporation-Oaths, By-Laws, Priviledges, and Cuſtoms. But God hath made no ſuch Corporations in his Church, nor ſet any ſuch Locks and Bolts upon particular Churches, though every Chriſtian is to be peaceable and conform himſelf to the innocent cuſtoms and faſhions of that Church to which he ſhall come, or ſo demean himſelf as to give no offence. Every Subject of *England* is not a Free-man of *London*. But every Chriſtian Man is by the Law and Rights of Chriſtianity a Free-man of the heavenly City, and if particular Churches ſhall cauſeleſly excommunicate the Lords Free-men, and count them Invaders for not yielding to their incroachments, they do rather excommunicate themſelves from Chriſt and the Catholick Church, and commit Schiſm.

4. Mr. *Baxter*'s Doctrine is, *That Pariſh-Chapels and Oratories are not true Churches. He blames the Biſhops for putting down all the Pariſh-Biſhops and Churches, and turning them into mere Chapelries or Oratories, and calls it a heinous corrupting Crime.* Whenas he himſelf ſeems to do no leſs, by putting down all the Chapel-Miniſters, and Chapel-Meetings, and Oratories, and denying them to be proper Paſtors and Churches. The Biſhops, as he ſays, make all the Dioceſs one aſſociated Church, meeting in divers Aſſemblies. Mr. *Baxter* makes great and large pariſhes to be one aſſociated Church, meeting in divers Aſſemblies. What difference is between theſe two, ſave only that the one is a greater Pariſh or Dioceſs, and the other is a leſſer? *Magis & minus non variant ſpeciem.* Chapelries and Oratories are real Churches of Chriſt. One and the ſame Definition for the main agreeth to them and to the pariſh-Churches. Gods Word is read and taught in both, his Name is called upon, his praiſe is ſung, by a juſt ordained Miniſter, and worſhipping Chriſtian people, aſſembled together mutually for that intent. If the Chapel-miniſters and people ſhould once a month reſort to the pariſh-Church for the Sacrament, yet would not that make them at other times to be no proper Paſtors and Churches. For if the bare want of the Sacrament did make no Church, then there would be no Church any where but juſt on Sacrament-Days, and no longer than the Sacrament is a diſpenſing. And then *Iſrael* during their forty years ſojourning in the Wilderneſs had been no Church for want of Circumciſion,

ſion, nor all the Year long ſave juſt at the Paſſe-over. If my memory fail not, Mr. *Knox*, the famous Divine of *Scotland*, preſcribing rules of Diſcipline for the Churches, would have the Sacrament diſpenſed but ſome four times a year. Saith *Paul*, *Chriſt ſent me not to baptize, but to preach the Goſpel*: yet are the Sacraments holy inſtitutions of God, and concurrent marks by way of Appendix of Chriſts Church. But *Circumciſion is that of the heart*. Gods Temple of old was called an houſe of prayer, not that prayer was the only exerciſe, but it was a principal part, and without it all the reſt had been unhallowed and prophane. In like manner all Chriſtian Churches are ſacred Oratories or Houſes of prayer, conſiſting of an officiating Miniſter, and worſhipping Saints and Chriſtians. There may be ſome accidental, extrinſecal, worldly, and circumſtantial differences; but for ſubſtance they be all particular Churches of Chriſt.

5. He ſays, Mr. *Philip Nye*, an eminent Independent Miniſter, wrote to prove, *That the Chriſtian Magiſtrate may ſet up Teachers all over his Dominions, whom the people, upon his command, are bound to hear; But that to take any for their Paſtors, he thought they might not be compelled. The true way of Concord*, &c. *part* 3. *pag.* 127. Whether this be Mr. *Baxter*'s Judgment or no I cannot tell. But it ſhould ſeem it is, Becauſe he makes mutual covenanting between Paſtor and people to be of the eſſence of a particular Church, like as between Husband and Wife, likening the Church Univerſal to a Kingdom, and particular Churches to Cities and Corporations, and counting

counting all for Invaders that ſhall offer to intrude into their Communion and priviledges without firſt taking the particular Corporation-Oath; and his Doctrine is, That a man may be caſt out of a particular Church, and yet not caſt out of the Church Univerſal. But is this the way of curing Church-Diviſions? and is this according to the Title of his Book, *The true and only way of Concord of all the Chriſtian Churches?* The relation between Husband and Wife groweth by ſpecial Contract, is only between two, it may be between pagans, it is not diſſolved by wickedneſs, it laſteth till death. But the relation between paſtor and people is quite another thing. It is qualification that makes Chriſtians. And it is qualification and juſt ordination which makes Chriſtian paſtors and miniſters at large. And it is their being placed by the Magiſtrate in the ſeveral pariſhes, which makes them paſtors by office and relation to all the Chriſtian Souls in the pariſhes reſpectively. All that be Chriſtians are wedded by the common Bond of Chriſtianity to Jeſus Chriſt, and to all his miniſters and people through the World. And if Jeſus Chriſt ſhall by the hand of the Magiſtrate ſet a faithful Miniſter in the pariſh, he becomes thereby as to office and right a paſtor, a Guide, a Miniſter, and Teacher to their Souls. If they receive him not, they are Rebels and Traitors againſt Chriſt, and are no longer Chriſtian people, ſave as an adulterous Wife that breaks the bond of Wedlock, may be called a Wife, *Mat.* 10. 14, 15. If the Miniſter placed over them be a and Wolf, want the neceſſary qualifications of a Miniſter,

Miniſter, he is *ipſo jure* no Miniſter, no Paſtor, no Teacher ſent of God, ſave as a dead man may be called a man, or as a traiterous Ambaſſador may be called an Ambaſſadour. In ſuch caſe the people are bound to diſown him, and turn from him, and get them a Paſtor for their Souls where they can; not by entering into an inſnaring ſchiſmatical Oath or Covenant to this or that particular Miniſter, but by reſorting to the beſt Miniſter they can within their reach, attending to his Miniſtry, and contributing to his juſt maintenance. Pariſh bounds be of general uſe and conveniency, and what is ſo, all Chriſtians, paſtor and people, are bound by the general Laws and Rules of Chriſtianity to obſerve. But the ſalvation of the Soul, and the intereſt of the Church, and the Glory of God are the ſupreme Law, unto which pariſh-bounds and humane orders are to give place. Let people pleaſe God, and govern themſelves and Families in his fear, and look well to their Souls, and go to what Church they will. If they be guilty of ſome weakneſs, who is without? We muſt as wiſe and gentle Nurſes bear with them, and neither diſcourage them, nor favour them in ſin. As for the word *Diſcipline*, it is but once read in all the Bible, *Job* 36. 10. and not in that ſence that it is commonly uſed in Church-Diſputes. And for the Word *Suſpenſion*, it is not once named. Chriſts Diſcipline is *to do juſtly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God, to be wiſe as the Serpent, and innocent as the Dove.* There is no difference, as I conceive, between a Paſtor and a Teacher or Miniſter. He that is by office a

Teacher

Teacher or Miniſter is a Paſtor, and *vice verſa*. And the Paſtors Office is by feeding the people with knowledge and underſtanding, *Jer.* 3. 15. teaching publickly, and from houſe to houſe, and warning every one night and day with tears, *Act.* 20. 30, 31. And even Diſcipline it ſelf is by teaching, and by the Word of God faithfully opened, applied, and denounced, by differencing Doctrine, Eſteem, and Converſation. If the Magiſtrate place a Miniſter in the pariſh, he thereby becomes pariſh-paſtor as to office and juſt relation, being a worthy man. If the Magiſtrate remove him, and put in another worthy man, the relation between the old paſtor and people is diſſolved, and the new one becomes their paſtor. For *eodem modo quo quid conſtituitur, diſſolvitur*. Nothing cutteth off from a Church particular, but what cutteth off from Chriſt and Chriſtianity and the Church Univerſal. For every particular Church hath the eſſence and nature of the Church Univerſal within it. They do but differ as twenty and a hundred. Therefore what cutteth off from one, cutteth off from all. What cutteth not off from all, cutteth not off from any. Yet as every general Rule is not without ſome exceptions. So theſe general poſitions are not without their prudent and cautious exceptions, limitations and explications, and all to edification and the common good, which is the center of them all, and the ſupreme ſtanſtard.

Mr. *Baxter* ſomewhere gives account of his calling the people of his pariſh of *Kederminſter*, to declare, *If they took him for their Paſtor*. Say Yea

Yea or ſay No. If you ſay nothing, your ſilence will be taken for No. I will ſuppoſe my ſelf a Pariſhioner and a Chriſtian, and I anſwer for my ſelf and the reſt of the pariſh. Your Queſtion containeth in it many diſtinct Queſtions, which muſt be carefully opened. 1. If we take you to have all the juſt qualifications of a Paſtor. 2. If we take you to be duly ordained. 3. If we take you to be legally preſented, and to have title to this place. 4. If we take you alone for our Paſtor. Which of theſe Queſtions do you require our Anſwer to, or would you have us to anſwer to all of them? 1. To the firſt we anſwer, That Learning is one qualification of a Miniſter, of which ignorant, illiterate people can be no competent Judge. And as for wiſdome and holineſs, and miniſterial skill and fidelity, you are to make proof of them. It is not, as we conceive, for the Paſtors of Chriſt to ſeek their own praiſe, and ask their Congregations, Do you take me for a wiſe, and holy, and learned man? Would you have every Miniſter, when firſt he enters upon his place, to propoſe ſuch a queſtion to all in the pariſh, Men, Women, and Children, even all that are of age to diſcern and conſent to the things of God, and think himſelf no Paſtor to them, till they have anſwered yea to his queſtion? This is fitter to be anſwered ſome years after he hath been in the place, and hath gotten him many Seals of his Miniſtry, and hath made real proof of his Learning, Wiſdom, and Godlineſs. And what if this queſtion were never asked? Where do we find any ſuch queſtion propounded by any Prophet, Apoſtle, Paſtor,

or Teacher in any part of Gods Word? But this is not so properly a Consent or Covenant, as an act of judgment or approbation, or a speaking what we think and judge. So far as you do well, and manifest your self a learned and godly man, we shall be bound so to judge, and we do so esteem you. A Womans well esteeming of another, and thinking him a worthy man, is not a taking of him for her Husband, and consenting to be his Wife. 2. To the second we answer, It belongeth not to us to be present at Ordinations, we are bound to judg those to be justly ordained Ministers which are so reputed, and whom we have no reason to suspect. If you question your own Orders, so it is, we do not. 3. To the third we answer, We do not at all dispute the validity of your presentation, and legal title to this place. 4. To the fourth we answer, We know of no other person in view but you, there is no Competitor. If there were, we should be bound to chuse the best, and prefer Christ before *Barabbas*, an *Athanasius* before an *Arius*, a Saint before a Brute, and a wise Man before a Fool. The Question is not, Whether every Subject in the Kingdom is to be obedient to the Kings Orders by his Judges, Justices, Constables, *&c.* but whether or no every Subject in the Kingdom must be bound to take an Oath of Duty and Allegiance to every Justice, Constable, or Messenger, as well as to the King; and if he refuse, be debarred from the priviledges of a loyal and free-born Subject.

Having answered your Question as we could, we meekly ask you another, Do you take us

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and our Infants for Christians, or Church-Members and Parishioners, or do you not? If yea, we are your particular charge, and have a stated right to Baptism for our Infants, and to the Lords Supper for our selves: and if we come to Church, and behave our selves orderly there, and present our Infants to Baptism, and our selves to the Lords Supper, we have actual and immediate right, we do all that is necessary on our part to the producing of our claim, and the just proof of it between Pastor and people. If you put us by, you do us open wrong, and not us only, but you invade the rights of the Church Universal, and pluck up the Wheat with the Tares, and lay a foundation for endless Schisms and Church-Desolations. If you shall grant us to have right to Baptism for our Infants, and deny us to have right to the Lords Supper for our selves, *you do not walk uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel*, Gal. 2. 14. If you deny us and our Infants to be Christians, or Church-Members and Parishioners, we declare and profess for our selves and our Infants, that we are no Pagans, nor Turks, nor Jews, nor Quakers, nor Papists, but we are Christened Folks, Church people and Protestants; if we be Tares we are but such: it is Christs Command that you forbear to pluck us up, lest you pluck up the Wheat also. We are not intolerable in our lives. Those in Heaven were sometimes as bad as we. Our godly Neighbors were sometimes as ignorant, loose and carnal as we. Though our out-sides may not be so clean as some that make a more specious profession of

Religion, we are but of the common sort of Sinners, and Publicans and Harlots go into the Kingdome of Heaven before worldly Hypocrites, and proud, self-justifying, and censorious Pharisees. We do not think anothers wickedness any excuse to us: but we think there may be more hope of many a Thief or Cut-purse that is going to the Gallows to be hang'd, than there is of many a rich professour, and worldly, fleshly Hypocrite, who has wit and cunning to keep himself from external, gross pollutions, but there are seven abominations in his heart, *Prov.* 26. 25, 26. *Mat.* 23. 25, 26, 27, 28. he is deeply set upon this World, and hath more enmity in his heart against the holiness of Gods Saints, and is further from the Grace of Repentance and sound Conversion, than many a Publican, or common Sinner. We are willing to learn, we will refrain from sin what we can, we will do our endeavour, we will turn to no other Sect or Party, God is merciful, Christ hath died for Sinners, if you cast us and our Infants out, we think it to be church and soul-destroying severity, and the very way to endanger a Rebellion, and set all the Christian World in an uproar, and turn the Churches upside down. We know you will grant us to be Parishioners. As for knowledge, we have such knowledge as those are said to have *Zec.* 8. 23. *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the Nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you; for we have heard that God is with you,* and others mentioned in

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the Scripture, as *Act.* 19. 2. As for the peoples right in the election of their Miniſters, it is quite another thing from this matter of particular ſwearing or covenanting to them. There is no room for election, where a worthy Miniſter is ſet in place. It is not in the peoples choice to ſit under what Miniſtry they pleaſe, but they are to attend his proper Miniſtry, whoſe ſpecial Charge they are by the Laws of God and the juſt ſubordinate Laws of the King. But ſaith Mr. *Baxter*, "If a Miniſter "ſhall be ſo impoſed on, as that any man or wo-"man may come when they pleaſe, and force "him to give them the Sacrament of Communi-"on, without conſenting to take him for their "paſtor, or to be taught or guided by him, (yea "or give him ſatisfactory notice that they know "what the Sacrament is, or who Chriſt is) he is "a Slave and not a Paſtor, baſer than any "School-maſter, Philoſopher, or phyſician, that "are not forced to take a ſcholar, pupil, or pa-"tient againſt their will, or that will not take "them for their teacher or phyſician, and obey "them. *The true and only way of Concord, p.* 233.

I anſwer, If they make not a tolerable profeſſion of Chriſtianity, they produce no valid claim, we are not to admit them; but if their profeſſion be credible in a tolerable degree, though lamentably weak and defective, we may not reject them. And note that it is publick profeſſion in the publick Aſſembly, which is the juſt and ordinary claim to a publick right, and not a private profeſſion in the Miniſters Study or private Chamber, or elſewhere privately. It is no ſla-

very to ſet before them Gods Ordinance, and acquaint them with their duty, ſin and danger, and leave it to them to be their own Chuſers, to take or refuſe. If they refuſe of their own accord, we are blameleſs. If they be willing, and we refuſe and put them by, the charge is ours, we muſt anſwer it to God. The caſe between paſtor and people is not the ſame as between School-maſter and ſcholar, Philoſopher and pupil, Phyſician and patient, for all theſe relations may be among pagans. But it is only Chriſtians who can be paſtor and people. And yet I will allow the *Simile* ſoundly conſtrued, and it makes againſt you. The paſtor is a Spiritual phyſician under Chriſt, all the Chriſtians in the pariſh be his patients and cure. This ſame phyſician is under a ſolemn Oath and Bond to Jeſus Chriſt to look to the ſick ſouls of his cure; and they be under a ſolemn Oath or Bond to attend to all ſuch Receits and Cures as Jeſus Chriſt ſhall preſcribe unto them by his Servants or ſub-phyſicians. Now if the people ſhall come to him for ſpiritual medicines and cures, and ſhall make a due profeſſion of their fidelity to Chriſt, and ſhew themſelves willing to take all ſuch receits as the phyſician ſhall preſcribe them according to Chriſts will; it is not for the phyſician to exact of Chriſts patients a particular Oath or Covenant to himſelf, and an engagement to be ruled by him, and unleſs you will do this I will preſcribe you no cures. He ought to preſcribe them cures, yea and provoke them to take them as being for their good, and leave it to them to take or refuſe, to uſe or not at their pleaſure. Again, Mr.

Baxter

Baxter ſaith, *If many be forced into a Temple, not conſenting, it is a Priſon and not a Church*, Ib. pag. 231. But it may be both a priſon and a Church. If perſecutors ſhall turn the temple into a priſon, and force a number of Chriſtians paſtor and people into it, and they ſhall all join together orderly in the ſolemn Worſhip of God, as paſtor and people, it is both a priſon and a Church. Mr. *Baxter*'s Definition of a particular Church doth ſuppoſe them to be Chriſtians, paſtor and people, before this particular cementing Covenant or Aſſociation, by conſent. This particular Covenant doth not make them Chriſtians, paſtor and people, but it makes them a ſuſpected, ſchiſmatical and irregular Corporation. Mr. *Baxter* ſays plainly, "That expreſs covenanting of each "member with the Church and paſtor is lauda-"ble *ad bene eſſe*, but not neceſſary *ad eſſe*. But "ſome ſignification is neceſſary *ad eſſe*, that is, a "conſent to be a member of the Society, and "ſubmit to the paſtor, and hold communion "with that particular Church, to the ends in the "definition, *Ib. pag.* 232. So that from hence two Principles or Concluſions do inevitably follow. Firſt, That all thoſe Churches which want this particular cementing Covenant are no Churches at all. Secondly, That all thoſe Churches which have it, and not in the moſt plain and obliging way, are defective, ſpotted, and ill-favoured Churches. And this he calls, *The true and only way of concord of all the Chriſtian Churches*. For my part I cannot aſſent to it, and I believe few others beſides thoſe called Independents. It rather tendeth to Diſcord, & to make e-

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very ſingle paſtor or miniſter a Pope or Church-tyrant, and to make Chriſtian Churches ſchiſmatical and traiterous combinations, dividing themſelves from all other Churches and Chriſtians by a particular cementing Covenant, and denying admittance to *Peter* and *Paul*, and the moſt holy Saints of God, unleſs they ſhall take the Corporation-Covenant. Mark, I do not ſay that this particular Covenant doth this, but only it tendeth towards it, and giveth too much occaſion. For while the matter of the Oath or Covenant is not unlawful in it ſelf, it is not ſimply unlawful to ſwear it. But *Entia non ſunt multiplicanda.* Solemn Oaths and Church-Covenants are not to be multiplied, nor taken and impoſed without cauſe. Here is no cauſe. Mr. *Baxter* cites not one Scripture, nor pattern for it out of Gods Word, nor in all Antiquity, and his reaſons ſeem invalid. I know an eminent conforming Divine, and my very worthy Friend, hath writ a ſmall Tract for an explicite mutual Covenant between paſtor and people, as prudential only. But his deſign takes with few or none. I do humbly oppoſe it as not prudential. And in this I have the ſtream of Epiſcopal and Presbyterian Divines on my ſide.

I know, by many, promiſcuous admiſſion, as it is called, is counted looſeneſs. To ſuch I ſay, That God is more holy than man. And this is Gods plain Command as plain as can be ſpoken, *Mat.* 13. Forbear to pluck up the Tares, leſt you pluck up the Wheat alſo. And, if I may be bold to make uſe of *Mr. Baxter*'s own words, *Treatiſe of Confirmation, pag.* 173. Firſt, *They are Traitors*

Traitors to Chriſt under the name of Paſtors, which ſhall wilfully caſt out his Miniſterial, Kingly Government. Secondly, *They betray the Church to licentiouſneſs.* Thirdly, *They ſet up a new Church way.* Forgive the application by any but your ſelf, and let the argument be mine. Evade it if you can. Either you will pluck up all the viſible tolerable Tares, or but ſome only. If but ſome, you are partial. If all, you cannot avoid plucking up all or much of the Wheat too. If you barre the Tares from the Lords Supper, you plainly pluck them up, and leave them no ſtanding with the Wheat, and either caſt them out to the wild Waſte or Common, or you divide the Field or Church into two partitions, and ſo make two contrary Fields or Churches, one for the Tares, another for the Wheat. But either way you go from Chriſts Command, and take on you to be more holy than God. If the Lords Supper were not a concurrent means of Converſion as well as of Confirmation, *ſuo genere*, by way of Appendix and viſible Obſignation, you had ſome more reaſon to barre the unconverted from the Sacrament. But this point I have, as I conceive, convincingly and ſcripturally cleared. And the proof rather lies on your part, to ſhew that only this one Ordinance is not *in ſuo genere* converting, when all other publick Ordinances are, both by inſtitution and the nature of the thing. It is certain, that though punitive Juſtice be not pleaſing to the guilty, few malefactors love to be hang'd, yet punitive Juſtice is Juſtice, and all true Juſtice is ſilencing, ſelf-evidencing, and juſtifieth God, and condemn-

demneth the Sinner.' Now this is clear Juſtice, Let the Ordinance be ſet before them, and let it be left to them to take or refuſe. If their own conſcience will admit them, while they come in common decency, not as *Zimri* and *Cozbi*, in the open act of groſs ſin, Chriſt will not barre them from the outward Ordinance. *Judas* himſelf ſeems clearly to have been both at the Paſſe-over and Lords Supper. But then let them look to it, that they may be faithful in performance. If they be unfaithful, their own mouth will condemn them, and juſtifie God, and God would have it to be ſo, that they may have nothing to ſay for themſelves. If when Salvation is tendered to them in the Sacrament, and laid at their door, they will not have it, but go away of their own accord, this way alſo they are ſelf-condemned and God is juſtified. But when they deſire the outward means of Converſion, and you barre them, and that without any legal tryal, this is not juſtice, but plain injuſtice, the people are ſenſible of it, it is ſtrong phyſick, and they cannot bear it, and by this means many ſincere and honeſt Chriſtians alſo are kept away, while many Hypocrites and viſible Tares through partiality are let in. You ſeem to make an Idol of the outward Bread and Wine, as though theſe were more holy than Chriſt himſelf. You allow the unconverted to take into their mouths, in prayer for converſion, and in ſinging of pſalms, *this glorious and fearful Name*, *THE LORD THY GOD*, *Deut* 28. 58. but the conſecrated Bread and Wine you imagine to have ſuch paſſing holineſs in them, no unconvert-

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ed man may touch them with his hands or lips. Did the late Covenanters in *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland* set up a Consistory or Judicature in every Parish, to try peoples rights to that Covenant, who were godly, and who were ungodly, and barre from swearing that Covenant all whose lives did confute their profession? Judge not by appearance, but judge righteous judgment. If the King and Parliament should in imitation of the godly Kings of *Judah*, *Asa*, *Hezekiah*, and *Josias*, call all the Subjects in the Kingdom being Church-people to fasting, and prayer, and humiliation, and solemn covenanting with God at the Lords Table, what an out-cry would there be by multitudes of good ministers and people against that part of it that concerns the covenanting Ordinance, and for fear of being polluted by the presence of wicked men? they would run away from their own mercy, and in zeal for purity commit hypocrisie, perceiving a mote in anothers eye, and not the beam in their own. Look as when Christ saw the multitudes he was moved with compassion on them, *Mat.* 9. 36. and he opened his mouth and taught them, *Mat.* 5. 1, 2. whence some Divines have gathered this Doctrine, The multitude of people doth quicken the preacher; and look as when at the red sea the Children of *Israel* saw the Egyptians dead upon the Sea shore, and themselves safe, they feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and *Moses*, and sang a psalm of praise to God, *Exod.* 14. 30, 31. and *Chap.* 15. 1. so the multitude of Communicants would quicken both pastor and people, and the sight of many poor Souls setting

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their hand and ſeal to the Bond of their own Damnation if they die without ſincere repentance, would fetch tears from the eyes, and cauſe much melting tenderneſs in the hearts, of gracious perſons, and make them burſt forth in the praiſes of God, and be the more abundantly thankful for their own Souls. And it would much conduce to the freeing of honeſt Chriſtians from perplexing doubts and fears, wherewith their ſpirits are apt to be poſſeſſed, and make them come to the Lords Table with the more chearfulneſs and alacrity, when they ſhall underſtand that if they be unconverted, they may with more ſafety go to the Lords Supper, and uſe it as a means of Converſion, than in any wiſe tarry away. Whereas when they are told, that none but the converted are to come, and that it is no converting Ordinance, it raiſes in them ſcruples and fears, and ſadneſs, and horrour ſeize upon them, and they have no comfort in receiving for want of aſſurance, and they can have leſs comfort in not receiving, if they well underſtood themſelves, for want of obedience. I dare ſay, that if you ſet the Sacrament Door as wide open as the Church Door, there are multitudes of carnal people that will not come; but that which keeps them away from all other publick Ordinances, and uſing the external means, will keep them alſo from this. Yea, and from this rather than from the reſt. I never ſaw or obſerved one perſon to this day that came to the Sacrament, but alſo they came to other publick Ordinances. But I have obſerved multitudes, and it is ordinary and frequent in all

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Congregations for many to come to all other Ordinances, and go away from the Sacrament. And even godly people themſelves do make too many haltings and intermiſſions, and do but too often withdraw themſelves. And I am certain from Scripture, and the clear evidence of the thing it ſelf, and mine own experience, that the carnal heart of man hath no mind to come under Gods holy Bonds. But it fares with the Sacrament as with all other good things, the better they are, the worſe they become when corrupted. But when people come to die, then their awakened conſciences ſmite them for neglect of the Sacrament.

I lay my ſelf at the feet of Mr. *Baxter*, that eminent, and now aged, Servant of God, and my moſt dear and worthy friend, craving pardon for my rudeneſs, and ſubmitting what I have here writ, and in my Book called the *Conforming Non-Conformiſt*, &c. and *Supplement* ſince added to it, to impartial cenſure and correction. I have ever thought it my praiſe, and ſo ſhall to the laſt, to be the Scholar of ſuch a Maſter, *& ſequi Patrem non paſſibus æquis.* And it is not without ſorrow of heart that I have thus appeared in publick againſt any thing aſſerted by him. I little thought once that ever I ſhould be engaged in any ſuch Lot, and if any man ſome months ago had told me any ſuch thing, I could not have believed it. It hath happened to me as to ſome before me, who going about to confute other mens opinions, themſelves have fallen into them. Wherein he conceives me to be wrong, let him not ſpare me. I entreat him to

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accept my publick Answer to his private Question when last I was with him, which then I suspended. At present I purpose to accept of no Living, great or small, nor to engage my self to any people, but to remain free and at large to exercise my ministerial office, as an unfixed, movable Minister, as I shall have call. And though I have incurred the displeasure of many of my friends, and receive smitings from both sides, I am well content. The Lord preserve and save me from my self. If I fall, it will be by mine own hands. If I stand, it must be by God, by truth and simplicity, and these are a sure Rock, and enough for a true Believer. If I am mistaken, I am mistaken.

London, April 10.
1680.

J. C.

FINIS.

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